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SWNCC 304

4 June 1946

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STATE-WAR-NAVY COORDINATING COMMITTEE

PSYCHOLOGICAL WARFARE

Note by the Secretaries

The enclosure, a memorandum by the Acting Navy Member, is circulated for consideration by the Committee.

ALEXANDER D. REID

B. L. AUSTIN

HAROLD W. MOSELEY

Secretariat

SWNCC 304

*[Handwritten signature]*  
*a true copy*

SECRETENCLOSUREPSYCHOLOGICAL WARFAREMemorandum by the Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Air

1. The United States had a gratifying measure of success during World War II in assisting military operations by means of psychological warfare. Time, fortunately, was available at the beginning of the war to make plans for psychological warfare, and to integrate them with military operations. Success came only after protracted, extensive studies of the subject, and resultant trial-and-error methods. Coordinated staff studies to increase the effectiveness of psychological warfare, particularly with respect to better coordination in military theaters, were canceled when Japan surrendered.

2. The Joint Chiefs of Staff are now undertaking an analytical history of U.S. psychological warfare which will be completed in about one year. There are at present a number of reports and records in the State, War and Navy Departments on psychological warfare during World War II. These, in combination with CCS, JCS, JPS and other official papers on the subject and the present availability in Washington of a number of civilian and military personnel who participated in World War II efforts, form an invaluable reservoir of knowledge with respect to the earlier phases and subsequent problems involved in plans, coordination, implementation and techniques. Personnel available also are cognizant of the successes and failures registered.

3. I am of the opinion that with this number of experienced personnel and with ample source material on which to draw, we should proceed now with an analytical study of U.S. psychological warfare in World War II with a view toward keeping this weapon in a state of coordinated readiness for future wartime

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Enclosure

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employment. Additional data, such as that which undoubtedly will be contained in the Joint Chiefs of Staff history, can be evaluated later upon completion of this comprehensive study.

4. It is recommended that an ad hoc committee be appointed by SWNCC to study and report on the future status of psychological warfare. As an approach to the committee's problem, I consider it may be assumed that future national psychological warfare effort will continue under non-military control, and that integration of the national effort with military plans will be requisite so as to assist and not to interfere with those plans. With this assumption, it is proposed that the committee be directed to review World War II efforts in psychological warfare, and recommend:

a. A peacetime organization for keeping psychological warfare in a ready-for-mobilization status;

b. A wartime psychological warfare organization;

both organizations to be assigned such directives as will insure effective planning, coordination and implementation, particularly with respect to the integration of national psychological warfare with military plans.